

British Studies Intelligencer (on-line)
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The British Studies Intelligencer has been available on-line for over a year now. St. Mary's College of Maryland provided space of their server, and I have been advised by our instructional technology specialist, Pam Hicks, who is assigned to the Division of History and Social Science.

The web page (<http://www.smcm.edu/BSI>) is divided into sections, which currently include listings of calls for papers and other announcements, essays on issues of pedagogy, and a link for obituaries. Digital technology allows me to add images and photographs, and currently there is a photograph of the council from last year's meeting on the main page and a photograph of Professor Joseph Altholz is included with his obituary.

There are several issues that I would like to bring to the attention of the council.

1. Cost was the major consideration in the move from publishing a newsletter that is mailed to the membership of the NACBS to an on-line newsletter. The current arrangement does not cost the organization anything, and I do not anticipate any change in the arrangement that I have with St. Mary's College. There are, however, other problems attendant on publishing an on-line newsletter in a college environment that became painfully apparent this fall. The virus outbreak at the beginning of the semester made the college server very unreliable, and I often found it impossible to access the web-site to edit and up-date the site. This virus outbreak was not, of course, limited to St. Mary's College, but our situation was further compounded by the impact of hurricane Isabel which led to the college to take our servers off-line in order to deal with the campus-wide power outages. Although this combination of events would not (I hope) recur often, it reminds us that availing ourselves of the advantages of issuing the newsletter on-line in a college environment does entail some disadvantages as well.
2. In the discussion about going to an on-line format, some raised the question of whether the membership would avail themselves of the information included in the BSI. Informally, I have heard people say that although they would read a printed newsletter that they would never take the trouble to look up the BSI on-line. Currently, I have no direct means of evaluating BSI readership because the St. Mary's College web server does not make available to me counter software that would keep track of the number of people who visit the site. Our technology advisor is looking into obtaining counting capacity for my use, which would allow a more formal way to assess the usefulness of the new format. In recent months, I have noticed an increase in the number of requests that I have received to post information that perhaps indicates that people are becoming accustomed to the new arrangement.
3. There is considerable overlap, especially in the category of calls for papers and announcements, in the information I have been including on the BSI and information

available through the IHR web-site or H-Albion. In the web environment some information gets repeated over and over again while other information perhaps gets lost. Should BSI seek to situate as a broad and inclusive repository or should it be more tightly focused on information clearly of particular interest to the continental and regional membership?

4. I consider the BSI on-line web site as still in an experimental phase, especially in terms of content and format and so would welcome any suggestions.